

Message Text

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ACTION ACDA-19

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FM AMEMBASSY VIENNA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2440

SECDEF WASHDC

INFO USMISSION NATO

AMEMBASSY BONN

USNMR SHAPE

AMEMBASSY LONDON

USCINCEUR

S E C R E T VIENNA 3242

MBFR NEGOTIATIONS

FROM US REP MBFR

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PARM, NATO

SUBJECT: MBFR NEGOTIATIONS: AD HOC GROUP MEETING
OF APRIL 9, 1974

1. SUMMARY: UK REP (ROSE) REPORTED TO THE AHG ON 9 APRIL
THE FOLLOWING BILATERAL WITH SOVIET DEP REP SMIRNOVSKY
WHICH TOOK PLACE OVER LUNCH ON 9 APRIL. CONVERSATION
TOUCHED ON THE FOLLOWING SUBJECTS: (A) KHESTOV
RETURNING TO VIENNA; (B) CLARIFICATION OF US REP
REFERENCE TO "A SMALL FIRST STEP" IN THE US 9 APRIL
PLENARY STATMENT; (C) THE DESIRABILITY OF REDUCING
PLENARY MEETINGS AFTER THE EASTER BREAK; (D) THE
INCLUSION OF MILITARY EXPERTS IN INFORMAL SESSION ON
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DATA; (E) AND WHETHER OR NOT THE EAST WOULD ACCEPT

A US/SOVIET PHASE I IN EXCHANGE FOR A FREEZE ON OTHER FORCES.

2. BEGIN TEXT:

1. I ASKED SMIRNOVSKY TO LUNCH IN ORDER TO HAVE A GENERAL TALK BEFORE THE RECESS. AFTER A BRIEF DISCUSSION ON OTHER SUBJECTS, I ASKED HIM ABOUT KHLESTOV'S FUTURE, SAYING THAT I HAD HEARD HE MIGHT BE REMAINING IN MOSCOW TO CONCENTRATE ON HIS DUTIES AS HEAD OF THE LEGAL DEPARTMENT. SMIRNOVSKY SAID THAT, AS I KNEW, MOST OF THE SOVIET DELEGATION WANTED TO RETURN TO THEIR POSTS IN MOSCOW, KHLESTOV AMONG THEM. IN PARTICULAR, KHLESTOV WAS ANXIOUS TO ATTEND THE LAW OF THE SEA CONFERENCE AT CARACAS IN JUNE AND HAD KEPT IN CLOSE TOUCH WITH THIS SUBJECT. BUT SMIRNOVSKY SAID NOTHING MORE DEFINITE ON THE SUBJECT OF KHLESTOV'S FUTURE.

2. SMIRNOVSKY ASKED ME WHAT AMBASSADOR RESOR HAD MEANT BY HIS REFERENCE AT THIS MORNING'S PLENARY TO BUILDING ON COMMON GROUND "FOR A SMALL FIRST STEP". DID THIS IMPLY ANY MOVEMENT IN THE DIRECTION OF EASTERN PROPOSALS? IF NOT, WHAT STEP HAD WE IN MIND? HE COULD NOT IMAGINE THAT THIS WAS A REFERENCE TO US/SOVIET REDUCTIONS, SINCE THE WITHDRAWAL OF A SOVIET TANK ARMY COULD HARDLY BE DESCRIBED AS A "SMALL STEP". I SAID THIS WAS A REFERENCE TO THE UNDERSTANDING REACHED THAT WE WOULD DISCUSS, IN INFORMAL SESSION, WHOSE FORCES SHOULD BE REDUCED FROM THE OUTSET. IT HAD BEEN AGREED THAT THERE SHOULD BE NO REFERENCE TO THIS UNDERSTANDING IN PLENARY STATEMENTS, BUT WE REGARD IT AS A VALUABLE PROCEDURAL STEP, IN DISCUSSION OF WHICH WE HOPED TO BE ABLE TO BUILD ON THE POINTS WE HAD IN COMMON AND WHICH AMBASSADOR RESOR HAD REFERRED TO EARLIER IN HIS STATEMENT.

3. I ASKED SMIRNOVSKY WHETHER THE EAST WOULD AGREE TO A REDUCED PROGRAMME OF PLENARY MEETINGS AFTER THE RECESS AND WHAT VALUE THEY ATTACHED TO THE CONTINUATION OF THE SERIES OF INFORMAL CONTACTS. HE REPLIED THAT THEY MIGHT WISH TO MAINTAIN THE THEORETICAL POSITION THAT THERE WERE TWO PLENARIES A WEEK, WHILE ACCEPTING IN PRACTICE THAT ONLY ONE TOOK PLACE IN THE ABSENCE OF SPEAKERS FOR THE OTHER. HE DID NOT DEMUR

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WHEN I SUGGESTED THAT THERE MIGHT BE ADVANTAGE IN MOVING TOWARDS A POSITION WHEN SPOKESMEN FOR THE EAST AND WEST MADE STATEMENTS IN ALTERNATE WEEKS. I MADE IT CLEAR THAT HTIS WAS PURELY A PERSONAL IDEA, WHICH WAS NOT BEING PUT FORWARD WITH ANY MANDATE FROM MY COLLEAGUES. WITH REGARDS THE INFORMAL MEETINGS, SMIRNOVSKY CONFIRMED THAT THE EAST REGARDED THIS MEANS OF CONTACT AS USEFUL AND WOULD LIKE TO CONTINUE IT AFTER THE RECESS.

4. I ASKED HOW HE THOUGHT WE SHOULD CONTINUE WITH THE DISCUSSION OF DEFINITIONS AND THE DATA BASE. SMIRNOVSKY SAID THERE WOULD BE ADVANTAGE IN MILITARY EXPERTS GETTING TOGETHER ON THIS SUBJECT. HOWEVER WHEN I SUGGESTED THAT THERE WERE POLITICAL ASPECTS WHICH MIGHT MAKE IT DESIRABLE FOR THE MATTER TO BE KEPT IN THE HANDS OF HEADS OF DELEGATION, POSSIBLY WITH SOME MILITARY EXPERTS PRESENT, HE AGREED. HE WELCOMED THE IDEA OF ASSOCIATING MILITARY EXPERTS, ON THE EASTERN SIDE, WITH THE POLITICAL PROBLEMS IN THIS WAY AND SAID THAT, PROVIDED THE GATHERINGS WERE NOT TOO LARGE, THIS WOULD HAVE AN EDUCATIVE VALUE. HE THOUGHT, HOWEVER, THAT AFTER PERHAPS ONE MORE SESSION ON DEFINITIONS, THIS SUBJECT MIGHT BE DEFERRED FOR CONSIDERATION ONCE AGREEMENT HAD BEEN REACHED ON OTHER ISSUES. WHEN I POINTED OUT THAT, FOR THE WEST, THE CARDINAL ISSUE WAS THAT OF GROUND FORCE DISPARITIES AND THIS WAS THE BASIS OF OUR PROPOSAL FOR ASYMMETRICAL REDUCTIONS LEADING TO A COMMON CEILING, HE SAID THAT THE EAST DID NOT ACCEPT OUR FIGURES AND WOULD, IN DUE COURSE, DEMONSTRATE THAT THEY WERE NOT AS UNEQUAL AS WE SUGGESTED. I REPLIED THAT, IF THIS WAS SO, IT SHOULD MAKE IT EASIER FOR THE EAST TO ACCEPT A COMMON CEILING SINCE, ACCORDING TO HIS ARGUMENT, THIS WOULD NOT INVOLVE SUCH UNEQUAL REDUCTION AS WE WERE PROPOSING. HE COUNTERED THIS BY SAYING THAT, WHAT WAS UNEQUAL ABOUT THE COMMON CEILING, WAS THAT IT DID NOT INCLUDE NUCLEAR AND AIR FORCES. WE THEN CONTINUED FOR SOME TIME ON FAMILIAR GROUND.

5. FINALLY, I SAID THAT I HAD BEEN INTERESTED IN COMPARING WHAT THE EAST HAD SAID ABOUT SYMBOLIC REDUCTIONS WITH WHAT HAD BEEN SAID, MAINLY BY KHLESTOV, ON THE SUBJECT OF A "FREEZE". WOULD I BE RIGHT IN DEDUCING THAT THE PURPOSE OF THESE TWO THINGS WAS, IN PRACTICE, THE SAME, NAMELY THAT WHAT THE RUSSIANS WANTED TO ENSURE WAS THAT, IF ONLY US FORCES WERE

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REDUCED ON THE WESTERN SIDE, OTHER NATO FORCES WERE NOT FREE TO INCREASE IN COMPENSATION? SMIRNOVSKY SAID THE IMPORTANCE
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